

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

## NOVEMBER 2004

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Each month I establish, with input from the Directors, the priority issues on which management and the staff focus. This report summarizes the work that was accomplished during the month as well as other items I feel will give the Council a better understanding of what the staff and I are doing to accomplish our performance objectives.

### **I. Improve the efficiency and accountability of management within the organization**

- SCAG was just awarded the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for FY 2002/2003. This is the first time that SCAG has received this award. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.
- SCAG's cash management continues to improve. In the first three months of the fiscal year, draw downs on SCAG's letter of credit totaled just over three million compared to nearly six million dollars for the same period last fiscal year. In the first three months of the fiscal year, we had 52 debt-free days out of 90.

### **II. Provide support to the Regional Council in providing direction and Leadership to SCAG**

- On October 5th I participated in a live broadcast from the Port of Long Beach, KNX Radio "Business Hour" Program, and was interviewed by the host, Bob McCormick. There were separate interviews with Dick Steinke, Executive Director of the Port of Long Beach, John Doherty, CEO, Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, Vera Adams from the Homeland Security Department, and a representative from the Trucking Industry. I spoke about the role that the port plays in the regional economy as well as the ground transportation issues associated with the port's current and future operations.
- On October 11th-15th President Ron Roberts and I were the Keynote Speakers at a Symposium at the Seoul Development Institute. The paper we presented, "Planning Issues and Policy Measures for Sustainable Growth of Seoul and Los Angeles", sparked an extensive discussion of the governance issues facing both regions. The visit culminated with a meeting with the Mayor of Seoul, Myung Bak Lee. He likewise was interested in our "bottom-up" regional decision-making structure as compared with their highly centralized structure where major regional decisions are made at the National level.
- On October 20th I participated as a luncheon speaker at the Partnerships in Transportation Conference in Sacramento. The conference was organized by Caltrans Office of Innovative Finance. Sunne McPeak, Secretary, Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, was the morning speaker. Emil Frankel, U.S. Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary for Policy also spoke. The Conference highlighted many of the public/private partnerships that have been developed in Southern California.
- On October 21st President Ron Roberts and I met with the Building Industry Association leadership in Anaheim to discuss the next steps on growth visioning and the involvement of BIA in the regional implementation process for Compass.

- On October 22nd I attended the Westside Economic Collaborative Economic Summit and participated on a Transportation Panel that dealt with “Challenges and Solutions for the Westside.” Greg Freeman of LAEDC was the facilitator. Other panelists included State Senator Kevin Murray, and Roger Snoble, CEO, MTA.
- On October 25th I attended the Lake Arrowhead Symposium and participated in a panel titled: “Who’s in Charge? Overcoming Governance, Challenges to Planning, Regulating, and Managing Goods Movement.” Joan Sollenberger, Division Chief, Transportation Planning, California Department of Transportation, was moderator. Other panelists included Alan Lowenthal, Assemblymember, California Assembly, and Ronald Loveridge, Mayor, City of Riverside. Work in goods movement and the role of logistics in our region’s economy and the community and environmental mitigation that needs to occur were key topics discussed at the Conference. Other Regional Councilmembers in attendance included Bev Perry, City of Brea, Jan Perry, City of Los Angeles, Harry Baldwin, City of San Gabriel, and Bea Proo, City of Pico Rivera.
- On October 30th I participated in a conference on the Entertainment Industry, City Building, and the Development of Southern California at the Huntington Library. Other speakers and panelists included Marc Wanamaker, Julie Lugo Cerro, William H. Fain, William Fulton and Greg Hise. The conference brought together historians, urban planners, and business and civic leaders to discuss the history and development of the entertainment industry. The speakers and panelists examined the growth of the movie and television studios, theme parks, and other entertainment venues and what implications this industry could have on the region’s future.

### III. SCAG Operations

- Recruitment/Selection. The first review of Director of ISD position applications began 10/15/04. Interviews of the best qualified candidates are planned for the near future.
- Office Improvements Project. SCAG staff have completed Phase I of the office improvements project and any feedback would be appreciated.

During Phase II, the employee workspace areas on both the 11th and 12th floors will be painted. Phase II is scheduled to be completed by the end of January 2005.

- OWP. The first formal Amendment of the FY 2004-05 Overall Work Program has been completed and will be presented at this meeting for approval. The amendment adjusts SCAG staff allocations to various projects, adds new funding for SCAG consultants and subregional projects and adjusts the carryover amounts for special grants.

The FY 2004-05 Overall Work Program 1st Quarter Progress Report has been completed and submitted to Caltrans by their October 30th deadline. A review meeting will be held with Caltrans on November 9th.

Work is underway on the development of the FY 2005-06 Overall Work Program. A call for projects has gone out to the subregions and internally staff is developing the SCAG proposals. All requests for projects are due at SCAG on Friday, November 12.

#### IV. Implement Adopted Regional Plans

- MAGLEV. All signed and executed grant agreements have recently been received by SCAG. Work will begin on Phase II pending finalization of necessary contract revisions with Lockheed Martin. Two staff attended the Shanghai Maglev Conference and a report will be presented to the Maglev Task Force next month.

An RFP has been released for a \$750,000 High Speed Ground Transportation Alternatives Analysis.

- COMPASS. In partnership with the California Chapter of the American Planning Association and the Urban Land Institute, we will be convening a group of city managers to discuss Compass implementation of the 2% Strategy. This group will provide feedback on the strategies and tools SCAG is developing to assist local governments in incorporating the Regional Growth Principles into their plans and projects. Based on this feedback, these tools will be refined to be more useful to our member governments.

In addition, Community Development Division in cooperation with Transportation Finance staff initiated a working relationship with San Gabriel Valley COG to explore the wealth/value enhance mechanisms through Compass land use strategies. The initial study will focus around the redevelopment areas along the Gold Line East extension corridor.

- Regional Economic Analysis. Printed flyers and registration materials have also been sent out for SCAG's 8th Annual Regional Economic Forecast Conference, which is scheduled for November 18th. SCAG President Ron Roberts has encouraged RC members to attend, which they may do free of charge. President Roberts will also give the opening remarks at the Conference. The keynote speaker is Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary of California's Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency.

Following up on the "Subregional Economic Strategies" for Imperial County meetings in September, Bruce DeVine and Hsi-Hwa-Hu agreed to produce a joint economic and social indicators report—the first ever Imperial "State of the County" report.

- Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Though there is agreement on all substantive issues, the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has not, to date, executed the proposed settlement agreement pertaining litigation on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Staff expects the agreement to be completed before the November Regional Council meeting, and will present any update at that time. Staff is awaiting direction from HCD on whether and how to proceed with the next RHNA.
- LAX Master Plan. Aviation staff continues to monitor the progress of the LAX Master Plan, attending several Los Angeles City Council hearings on the Consensus Plan for LAX. The City Council met on October 20th to vote on several aspects of the Consensus Plan, in particular to override the County's vote that the Consensus Plan is incompatible with existing Land Use plans. The Council voted to override the County with 12 Ayes and three nays (Parks, Villaraigosa and Weiss). The City Council will meet December 7th for the final vote on approving the LAX Consensus Plan. Aviation staff are working with the City Council to ensure that the LAX Master Plan is consistent with SCAG's 2004 Regional Transportation Plan. The City of Los Angeles and the City of El Segundo are still in negotiations to enter

into a legally binding agreement between the two parties to hold LAX to 78 million passengers. Staff will continue to keep the Regional Council informed of significant developments concerning the adoption and implementation of the LAX Master Plan.

## **V. Develop Additional Planning Efforts**

- Air Quality. Staff had a coordination meeting with South Coast Air Quality Management District and the California Air Resources Board to discuss an initial schedule and framework for a coordinated process to develop the 2007 Air Quality Management Plan and the 2007 RTP. Staff are conducting the emissions analysis needed to make a conformity determination on the 2004 RTP/RTIP for the new 8-hour ozone standard.
- Goods Movement. SCAG is supporting the Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan with \$150,000 in funds this fiscal year. This is a joint effort among the five County Transportation Commissions, SCAG, and the four Caltrans districts in our region to develop a consensus strategy and implementation plan for the Southern California goods movement system. SCAG is also participating on the Technical Advisory Committee to the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation's (LAEDC) 5-County Joint Venture project, a related effort in which the five commissions and the two major freight railroads seek to develop a legislative approach to bring new money to the region for investment in goods movement infrastructure. SCAG-funded studies on the potential for container fees at the San Pedro Bay ports and on the need for additional inland freight rail capacity are also continuing.
- Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). The first RCP Task Force meeting was held on October 20th at MTA. The Task Force reviewed a preliminary comprehensive listing of SCAG policies that will form the basis for the plan. Further, the Task Force discussed ways in which regional policies can be effective in the local General Plan, and outlined near-term outreach activities.
- Statewide Performance Measures. Staff is working with the state to develop and assemble regional data for the development of a prototype Performance Report on a statewide basis which is anticipated to be completed by January of next year.

## **VI. Data**

### **Planning Data/GIS**

- Update to the Urbanized Boundaries within the SCAG Region. SCAG assisted the California Department of Transportation District 7 and District 12 (Los Angeles, Ventura and Orange counties) in reviewing the FHWA Urban/Rural boundaries. This was an effort to update the 1993 urban boundaries as required by the FHWA. The 1993 urban boundaries were based on 1990 Census. SCAG's GIS staff reviewed the updated boundaries submitted by Caltrans District 7 and District 12 based on the 2000 Census. SCAG staff concurred with both districts on the proposed changes to the boundaries. The California Department of Transportation uses the urban boundaries to determine urban vs. rural roads which influences funding.

- New Employment Data to Support Planning. SCAG has received access to the employer geocoded data for the region from the California Employment Development Department (EDD). The information will be used in the development of base year estimates for the next Regional Transportation Plan and other SCAG related planning activities. By acquiring the geocoded data from EDD, SCAG was able to save significant time and money (approximately \$80,000) over the traditional process of acquiring the data from private vendor(s).

## **Modeling**

- Regional Airport Model. SCAG Staff is working with the consultant to estimate the cost and time requirements to complete the Southern California Air Passenger Model. In addition, the consultant is writing a detailed description of the high-speed rail component of the Airport Model. SCAG modeling staff is currently working with SDCRAA staff to finalize the MOU to include San Diego into the Airport Model.
- Model Improvement Project. SCAG Staff continues working with Cambridge Systematics Inc. (CSI) to complete the Model Improvement Project. The primary purpose of the Model Improvement Project is to include changes in travel behavior from the Year 2000 Travel Survey and the Year 2000 Census. Cambridge has completed development of the updated generation model and is currently working to finalize the mode choice model. The Consultant is also coordinating SCAG's model development efforts with the development of MTA's destination choice (distribution) model. MTA's destination choice model will be incorporated into SCAG's Regional Model when fully calibrated and tested.

## **VII. Legislative Program**

- Draft 2005 State and Federal Legislative Program. Every year, the Regional Council adopts a state and federal legislative program to guide SCAG's legislative activities in the coming year. In recent weeks, Government Affairs and I have worked on the draft 2005 program that will be reviewed by the Policy Committees on November 4th.

This year's program continues several of SCAG's major legislative initiatives. The reauthorization of TEA-21 and the protection of Proposition 42 funds remain top priorities. We have consulted the county transportation commissions and Metrolink about the draft program and have received their suggestions, which we will make available to the committees.

Feedback from the committees will be incorporated into a revised program that will be returned to the Policy Committees and the Regional Council for approval in December. The 2005 legislative program will go into effect on January 1st.

- SCAG/Kern COG Joint Meeting. On October 27th, SCAG and Kern COG held a joint meeting in Santa Clarita. SCAG was represented by Regional Councilmember Carl Morehouse. The topics of discussion included the common corridors between the SCAG region and Kern County, freight and global gateways, Eastern California Planning Partnerships and transportation finance. SCAG's participation in joint meetings offers a great opportunity to build relationships with our neighboring COGs. We will meet again with Kern COG in the spring to continue sharing information and developing strategies.